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Effects of atomic radiation

Report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)

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I. Introduction

1. At its 3rd plenary meeting, on 19 September 2001, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include in the agenda of its fifty-sixth session the item entitled "Effects of atomic radiation" and to allocate it to the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee).

2. The Fourth Committee considered the item at its 8th and 9th meetings, on 17 and 18 October 2001 (see A/C.4/56/SR.8 and 9).

3. For its consideration of the item, the Committee had before it the following documents:

(a) Report of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation;[1]

(b) "*Hereditary Effects of Radiation: United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation 2001 Report to the General Assembly, with Scientific Annex*".[2]

4. At the 8th meeting, on 17 October, the Chairman of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation made a statement and introduced the report of the Committee[1] (see A/C.4/56/SR.8).

[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 46* (A/56/46).
[2] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.01.IX.2.

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II. Consideration of draft resolution A/C.4/56/L.5

5. At the 8th meeting, on 17 October 2001, the representative of Brazil, on behalf of Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Czech Republic, Denmark, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Finland, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Iceland, Indonesia, Israel, Italy, Japan, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Malta, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Paraguay, Peru, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, the Russian Federation, Singapore, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Thailand, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Uruguay, subsequently joined by Australia, Belarus, Cyprus, France, India, Ireland, Kazakhstan, Pakistan, San Marino, Suriname and Ukraine, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Effects of atomic radiation" (A/C.4/55/L.5).

6. At its 9th meeting, on 18 October, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.4/56/L.5 without a vote (see para. 7).

III. Recommendation of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)

7. The Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Effects of atomic radiation

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 913 (X) of 3 December 1955, by which it established the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation, and its subsequent resolutions on the subject, including resolution 55/121 of 8 December 2000,[3] in which, inter alia, it requested the Scientific Committee to continue its work,

Taking note with appreciation of the work of the Scientific Committee[4] and of the release of its extensive report, entitled *Hereditary Effects of Radiation: United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation 2001 Report to the General Assembly, with Scientific Annex*,[5]

Reaffirming the desirability of the Scientific Committee continuing its work,

Concerned about the potentially harmful effects on present and future generations resulting from the levels of radiation to which mankind and the environment are exposed,

Noting the views expressed by Member States at its fifty-sixth session with regard to the work of the Scientific Committee,

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[3] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 49*, vol. I, and corrigendum (A/55/49 (vol. I) and Corr.1).

[4] Ibid., *Fifty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 46* (A/56/46).

[5] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.01.IX.2.

Conscious of the continuing need to examine and compile information about atomic and ionizing radiation and to analyse its effects on mankind and the environment,

1. *Commends* the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation for the valuable contribution it has been making in the course of the past forty-six years, since its inception, to wider knowledge and understanding of the levels, effects and risks of ionizing radiation, and for fulfilling its original mandate with scientific authority and independence of judgement;

2. *Takes note with appreciation* of the work of the Scientific Committee[4] and of the release of its extensive report, which provides the scientific and world community with the Committee's latest evaluations of the hereditary effects of radiation;

3. *Reaffirms* the decision to maintain the present functions and independent role of the Scientific Committee, including its present reporting arrangements;

4. *Requests* the Scientific Committee to continue its work, including its important activities to increase knowledge of the levels, effects and risks of ionizing radiation from all sources, and invites the Scientific Committee to submit its programme of work to the General Assembly;

5. *Endorses* the intentions and plans of the Scientific Committee for its future activities of scientific review and assessment on behalf of the General Assembly;

6. *Requests* the Scientific Committee to continue at its next session the review of the important problems in the field of ionizing radiation and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session;

7. *Requests* the United Nations Environment Programme to continue providing support for the effective conduct of the work of the Scientific Committee and for the dissemination of its findings to the General Assembly, the scientific community and the public;

8. *Expresses its appreciation* for the assistance rendered to the Scientific Committee by Member States, the specialized agencies, the International Atomic Energy Agency and non-governmental organizations, and invites them to increase their cooperation in this field;

9. *Invites* the Scientific Committee to continue its consultations with scientists and experts from interested Member States in the process of preparing its future scientific reports;

10. *Welcomes*, in this context, the readiness of Member States to provide the Scientific Committee with relevant information on the effects of ionizing radiation in affected areas, and invites the Scientific Committee to analyse and give due consideration to such information, particularly in the light of its own findings;

11. *Invites* Member States, the organizations of the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations concerned to provide further relevant data about doses, effects and risks from various sources of radiation, which would greatly help in the preparation of future reports of the Scientific Committee to the General Assembly.